

THE  
CIRCUMSTANCES  
Before and after the  
SPEECH  
OF  
WILLIAM  
LATE  
Viscount Stafford.

**T**He two Sheriffs, with a considerable number of Gentlemen on Horseback, went to the Tower-Gate, and there demanded *W. Howard*, late Viscount *Stafford*. Between nine and ten a Clock, a Gentleman belonging to the Lieutenant of the Tower told the Sheriff, that the Lieutenant would wait upon them presently, and bring the Prisoner to the Bars; to which the Sheriffs answered, that they must preserve the Priviledges and Bounds of the City: An Officer replied, Sir, we were ordered to draw up two Companies from the Gate to the Bar, and there you are to receive the Prisoner.

*Sheriff*. Gentlemen, we will preserve the Liberties of the City, and are come at the Gate to demand the Prisoner; whether the Lieutenant will deliver him or no, we demand; accordingly he was delivered to the Sheriffs between the Gate and Bars.

Before the Prisoner came, several people being upon the Scaffold; among which, two that were appointed to write.

The Heads-man came up with two Blocks, one old, one new, in a Bag; also the Axe covered with a Cloth. The Block being taken out, the new Block was covered over with black, and laid upon a piece of black Bays, about two yards and a half long, upon which the Prisoner was to stretch himself. Then the Coffin was brought up, being coloured with two Letters, *W. S. 1680*. Then *W. S.* came upon the Scaffold, and asked for the Executioner.

*A.* Here he is.

*Staff.* Have you received money for the Cloaths?

*A.* No. then his Man took out a Purse of five pound, which the H. man objected against, and *W. S.* gave him two Guinies more.

His Speech was every word writ; which after he had read to the people, being more than 30000 in number to see Justice done upon the Traytor, he turned about, and kneeling down, prayed in *English* and *Latin*. Next he lifted up his hands, standing up, and said, *I beseech thee God, not to avenge my Innocent blood upon any man in the whole Kingdom, no not against those who by their Perjuries have brought me here; for I profess before Almighty God, that I never combined against the Kings life; nor any body else; but whatsoever I did was only to procure liberty for the Protestant Dissenters*

*Discontents, and the Romish Religion: And as for the D. of York, I do here declare upon my Salvation, I know of no Design that he ever had against the King, but hath ever behaved himself as a loving Loyal Brother ought to do.*

*So now upon my Salvation I have said true all that I have said, and I pray God to have mercy upon my Soul.*

Then he delivered the Latin Prayer to the Sheriff Bethel.

After which he went round the Scaffold and spake to the multitude thus, *I pray God bless the King, and bless you all, especially the Kings Loyal Subjects; for I know you have a good and gracious King as ever Raigned. God forgive me my sins, I forgive all the world, even those fellows that brought me here, and I pray God send them no worse punishment than to tell the truth; and so God bless you all.*

Then a Minister applyed himself and said, Sir, You disown the Indulgences of the Romish Church.

To which he answered with a great passion,

*Sir, What have you to do with my Religion? however I do say, that the Church of Rome allows no Indulgences for Murder, Lying, &c. and whatever I have said is true.*

*Min. Have you received no Absolution. Ans. I have received none at all.*

*Min. You said, that you never saw those Witnesses.*

*Ans. I never saw any of them but Dugdale, and that was at a time when I spake to him about a Footboy.*

Then his man took off his *Perriwig* and upper Coat, and with a pair of Sizers cut off the Collar of his Masters Shirt; after which *W. S.* lies down in a white Satin Waist-Coat, a quilted sky Coloured silk Cap with Lace turn'd up, &c.

He gave his Watch to a Gentleman, and Crucifix to his Page.

Having fitted his Neck to the Block, rose up upon his knees and prayed to himself, then takes the Block and embraced it, then his Servant cut off more of the Linen, in all which time he sent up short prayers, that Christ would receive his Spirit; then lying down, and praying upon the Block, the Sheriff Cornish askt of the Headman, if he had given him any sign, He answered No; whereupon *W. S.* rose up and asked, *what they wanted,* to which it was answered, *What sign will you give, &c.*

*Ans. No sign at all, Take your own time, Gods will be done.*

Whereupon the Executioner said, *I hope you forgive me,* he made answer, *I do.* Then lying down again, two of his Servants came with a piece of black silk to receive the head; then the Headman took the Axe in his hand, and after some pause, gave the Blow, which was choroly done, save the Cutting off of a little Skin, neither Body nor Head when severed, struggled to any purpose, but only quivered a little.

After which the Headman took out the Head from the Silk, and held it up to all, Crying aloud, *Here is the head of a Traytor against the King,* after which the Corps with the Head wrapt in silk, was put into a Coffin, and all carried to the Tower.

Thus with the Speech was taken by *J. Rows*, who was appointed by both Sheriffs for that very purpose.

*Edinburgh, Re-printed in the Year, 1681.*



